

CLAIMS

1. A method in a computer system network environment for providing support information to vendor customers via a third party support service provider from a host web page, the support information provided transparently such that a consistent web page format of the host site is maintained, the method comprising the steps of:

determining a HTML code for a representative host web page;

analyzing the HTML code from the representative page to determine portions of the HTML code that define a user's interface with the host web page;

copying the determined portions of the HTML code for use in a third party support service provider's page;

identifying portions of the HTML code specific to the host web page;

replacing identified portions of the HTML code specific to the host web page with the service provider's content; and

modifying the host web site to include a link to the support provider web site when support information is requested.

2. The method for providing support information to vendor customers of claim 1 further including reviewing a web page address of the host and editing the support service provider's web page address as appropriate to maintain consistent naming with the host's web page address.

3. The method for providing support information to vendor customers of claim 1 wherein the step of replacing identified portions of the HTML code specific to the host web page with the service provider's content is performed by a format processor at the time of the support information request.

4. A method for providing support information to vendor customers, comprising the steps of:

providing a vendor web site with vendor web pages including selected user interface features;

providing a support service provider web site with support service provider web pages including user interface features corresponding to the selected user interface features of the vendor web pages; and

linking a support selection on the vendor web site to the support service provider web site so that when customers make a support selection it will be transparently linked to the support service provider web page.

5. The method according to claim 4, further including the steps of:

providing links on the support service provider web pages that return users to the vendor web site.

6. The method of claim 4, further including the step of naming the support service provider web pages to include the vendor web page name.

7. A computer-implemented system for transparently providing support via an independent support provider web site through links provided on a host web site, comprising:

a host web site accessible via a computer networking system;

at least one of a host web page defined by HTML language in a specific HTML format;

a support service web site independent of the host web site, the support service web site accessible via the computer networking system;

a link on the host web page connecting the host web site to the support service web site;

at least one of a support service web page accessible through the link;

relevant support information provided on the support service web page, the relevant support information presented in a consistent format to the host web page as defined by the host web page HTML language in the specific HTML format.

8. The computer-implemented system of claim 7 wherein the support service web page includes visual displays from the vendor web site.

9. The computer-implemented system of claim 7 wherein the support service web page includes a uniform resource locator consistent with the vendor web site uniform resource locator.

10. The computer-implemented system of claim 7 further including a link on the support service web page connecting the support service web site back to the host web site.